

Dear Chairman Powell and Commissioners Abernathy, Copps, Martin, and Adelstein,

I am writing to postpone your June 2nd vote on relaxing the rules on media ownership to allow for more public discussion. This is a matter of such grave importance to the future of our country--indeed, it is every bit as significant as a Constitutional amendment--that it deserves to be formally and fully considered by ALL stakeholders.

Already I find that my own access to a wide spectrum of news is severely compromised. My friends and I now routinely turn to sources outside of the United States for our source of world--and national--events. The step you are considering will do more to jeopardize the American ideal of an informed electorate than any other decision I have witnessed in my lifetime.

I know that one of the reasons that has been put forward for this change in rules is "to reflect the changing marketplace and to help preserve free over-the-air television." But I would argue that the American public has no need for a "big media bail-out." Indeed, the very fact that technology HAS changed, and the existence of old technology, allows us access to the Internet, the satellite and cable TV, and to no-cost radio as a means of entertaining and informing ourselves. (I am speaking as a media consumer who, because of my remoteness, is currently able only to halfway access three television stations without cable.)

I do not consider access to television to be a primary freedom. Indeed, do we really need more reality tv, more vapid daytime interview shows, more info-tainment, more homogenization of local and national news?

But I do consider diversity of media on our public airwaves as essential to maintaining a democracy of the people, rather than a mediocracy. As the F.C.C. is charged with making decisions on behalf of the public, then it is only appropriate that the most important of the process leading up to the decision-making actively inform the public and encourage its participation!